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SUBJECT: GHANA NATIONAL RECONCILIATION COMMISSION SUBMITS
FINAL REPORT

1. (U) On October 12, the Ghana National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) submitted its final, five-volume report and recommendations to the GoG. The report follows 18 months of public hearings on alleged human rights abuses during the period of 1957-1993, which includes 20 years of rule by former President JJ Rawlings. Dr. Ken Attafuah, who was the NRC's Chief Executive until he went on leave in June and who authored some chapters of the report, told PolOff on October 12 that the GoG would review the report and then respond in a white paper. The GoG has given no date when the report will be released to the public.

2. (U) Both domestic and international human rights organizations have lauded the report's completion and the work of the NRC. Both President John Kufuor and NRC Chairman, Mr. Justice K.E. Amua-Sekyi, reiterated the point that the work of the NRC was "not supposed to be persecutory or prosecuting", and that the recommendations focused squarely on reparations to the victims of human rights abuses. Mr. Amua-Sekyi stated that the report recommended reparations for 3,000 (of a total 4,311) petitioners. President Kufuor noted that "the government will not go after them (the perpetrators) to exact justice, but will leave them to their conscience and faith", and that "destiny has its own way of exacting justice." President Kufuor expressed appreciation to various institutions, including USAID, for its assistance to the work of the NRC.

3. (SBU) The major opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), has publicly criticized the NRC's proceedings as incomplete and argued that the timing of the release (less than two months before elections) is politically motivated. The Chairman of the ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP) told the Charg that he would try to convince the GoG to hold its response until after the elections. He thought that there was not enough time between now and the elections to give full consideration to the report and that an earlier release would unnecessarily make the NRC report a campaign issue.

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